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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/566,579	01/31/2006	Takeshi Azami	Q92766	5131
23373 7590 10/14/2008 SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037				
EXAMINER				
MICALL, JOSEPH				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/566,579

Applicant(s)

AZAMI ET AL.

Examiner

JOSEPH V. MICALI

Art Unit

4181

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 1/31/2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-4 and 6-9 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 1/31/2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/31/2006
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Application

Claims 1-9 are pending. Claims 2-4 and 6-9 have been withdrawn in lieu of an oral election of the Group I invention. Thus, Group I, claims 1 and 5, are presented for examination.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

- Group I, claims 1 and 5, drawn to a nanocarbon manufacturing apparatus comprising a generation chamber and a recovery chamber, with moistening unit in either chamber.
 - Group II, claims 2-5, drawn to a nanocarbon manufacturing apparatus comprising an irradiating light source, a recovery unit, and a moistening unit.
 - Group III, claims 6-8, drawn to a method of manufacturing nanocarbon comprising irradiating light onto a surface graphite target and subsequently moistening the generated nanocarbon.
 - Group IV, claim 9, drawn to a method of recovering nanocarbon through moistening and recovering.
2. The inventions listed as Groups I-IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding

special technical features for the following reasons: the special technical feature which is referred to Annex B of Appendix A1 of the MPEP(Administrative Instructions under the PCT, "Unity of Invention"). The express "special technical features" is defined as meaning those technical features that define a contribution which each of the inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art."(Rule 13.2). Unity exists only when there is a technical relationship among the claimed inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding claimed special technical features. In instant case, the one common feature among the four groups of inventions is a moistening unit. The question of unity of invention has been reconsidered retroactively by the examiner in view of the search performed; a review of US Patent No. 6,171,451 by Miley et al., makes clear that the inventions of the groups I-IV lack the same or corresponding special technical feature because the cited reference(s) appear to demonstrate that the claimed technical feature does not define a contribution which each of the inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. Accordingly, the prior art of the record supports restriction of the claimed subject matter in to the groups as mentioned immediately above.

2. During a telephone conversation with J. Warren Lytle, Jr. on 9/12/2008, a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1 and 5, with claim 5 being dependent only on claim 1. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 2-4 and 6-9 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

3. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Rejoining Practice

4. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed to a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so**

may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder. Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

Priority

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in parent Application No. JP2003-289863, filed on 8/8/2003.

Specification

5. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the abstract is only 32 words in length. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

6. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: On page 4, line 12, the second "may" appears to be a typo of the word "way". On page 18, line 25, "firs" appears to

be a typo of the word “first”. On page 20, line 24, “splaying” appears to be a typo of the word “spraying”.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(e) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

9. Claims 1 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pub. No. 2001/001624 by Yudasaka et al, in view of US Patent No. 6,171,451 by Miley et al.

Yudasake teaches the process for producing single-wall carbon nanotubes. Specifically, it teaches a nanocarbon manufacturing apparatus comprising a generation chamber (laser ablation in this case, which aligns with the current application’s best mode for generation) and a recovery chamber for the collection of the nanocarbon. This is found in **claim 10 of Yudasake**.

Yudasake does not teach a moistening unit or spray unit in addition to the apparatus.

For the moistening unit element, Miley et al is used. Miley describes a device for the production of nanocarbons, specifically fullerenes, including a soot extraction mechanism for removing and collecting the fullerenes. The apparatus comprises a means of carbon soot extraction for removal and collection of said complex carbon molecules by a “wash down” method, as referenced in **claim 3 of Miley**. This “wash down” method is further limited to a system of spraying an appropriate liquid onto the internal surfaces of the gas containment vessels in order to remove accumulated soot, as referenced in **claim 31 of Miley**, anticipating the moistening unit and spray unit of current application’s claims 1 and 5.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to take the nanocarbon generation apparatus of Yudasake and include the moistening spray unit limitation in view of Miley. The suggestion or motivation to do so is to more effectively recover and collect the nanocarbon product in either a primary generation chamber or a secondary recovery chamber by injecting a solvent into the system to remove accumulation.

Conclusion

10. The elected claims 1 and 5 are rejected.
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOSEPH V. MICALI whose telephone number is (571)270-5906. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 5pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, VICKIE KIM can be reached on (571)272-0579. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

J.M.

/Vickie Kim/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 4181